

What you see is what you get... Observed impacts of visual education on recycling at the J. Willard Marriott Library, University of Utah

2010-2011

2011-2012

2012-2013

Timeline

Spring/Summer 2010 Duplex printing push – new posters encouraging duplex printing in the Knowledge Commons and throughout the building. Poster became part of library’s rotating poster collection and ran until May 2012.

August 2010 - Rolled out 20 centralized waste pods in all staff space –. Included new recycling posters at each waste pod and a larger version began rotation in the public space.

September 1, 2010 - Began tracking recycled materials.

January-February 2011- Annual push for Recycle Mania – encouraging staff to clean out their offices and recycle paper. Communications through email and posters.

August 2011 - Rolled out 12 new recycling quads throughout the building.

August 2011 - Installation of 2 water bottle filling stations.

August 18, 2011 through September 9, 2011 - Just Fill It! Exhibit.

Just Fill It! is an exhibit designed to increase awareness of the negative impact of plastic bottles on our environment and to encourage people to use refillable water bottles.



August 18, 2011 – Just Fill It! Poster became part of library’s rotating poster collection. Continues to be displayed in the library to date.

January 22 through March 31, 2012 - Annual push for Recycle Mania – encouraging staff to clean out their offices and recycle paper. Communications through email and social media.

March 28, 2012 - June 28, 2012 – Ran 3 exhibits consecutively

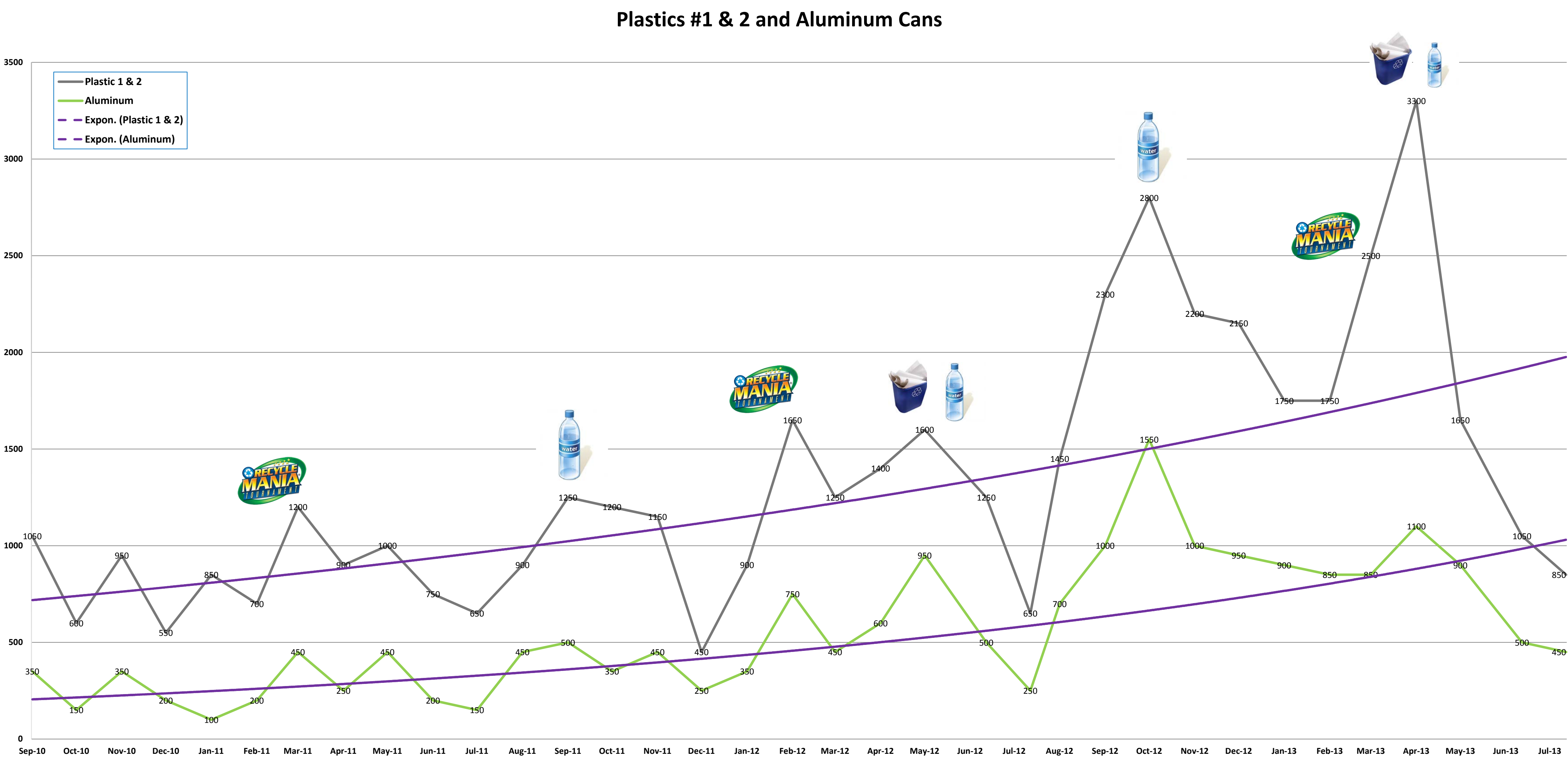
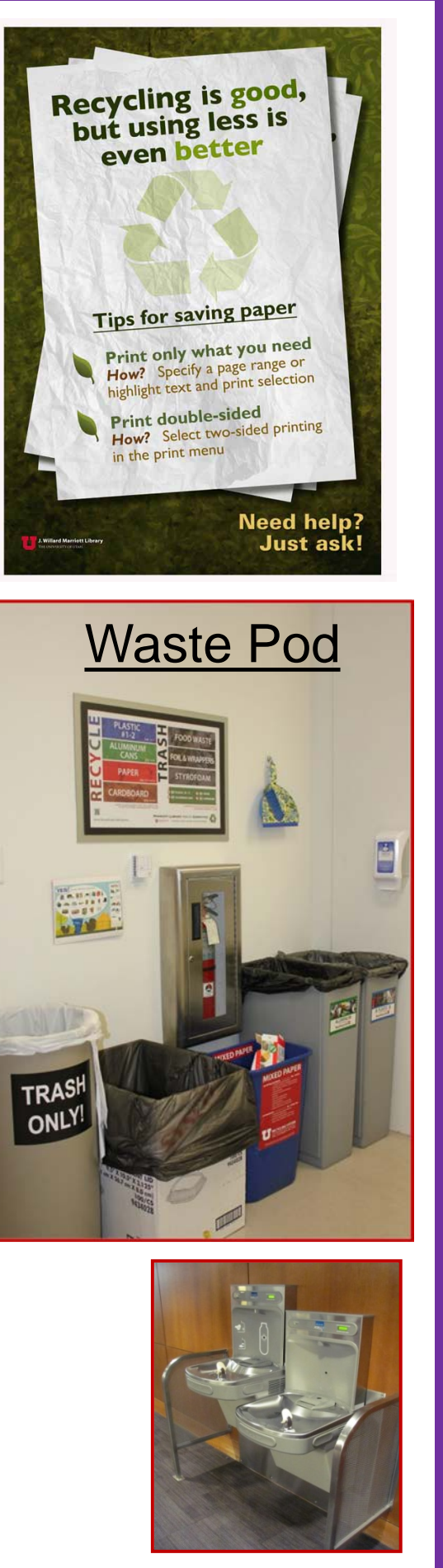
- Just Fill It! Exhibit ran second time.
- The Paper Project: Life Cycle of Paper Exhibit.
- Print Alternatives & Smart Printing Exhibit.

May 2012 Duplex printing push – updated “Recycling is good, but using less is even better” poster became part of library’s rotating poster collection. Continues to be displayed in the library to date.

August 2012 - Rolled out 14 new recycling quads throughout the building.

January 20 through March 30, 2013 - Annual push for Recycle Mania – encouraging staff to clean out their offices and recycle paper. Communications through email and social media.

March 14, 2013 - May 21, 2013 - Print Alternatives Exhibit.



Aluminum Cans Annually

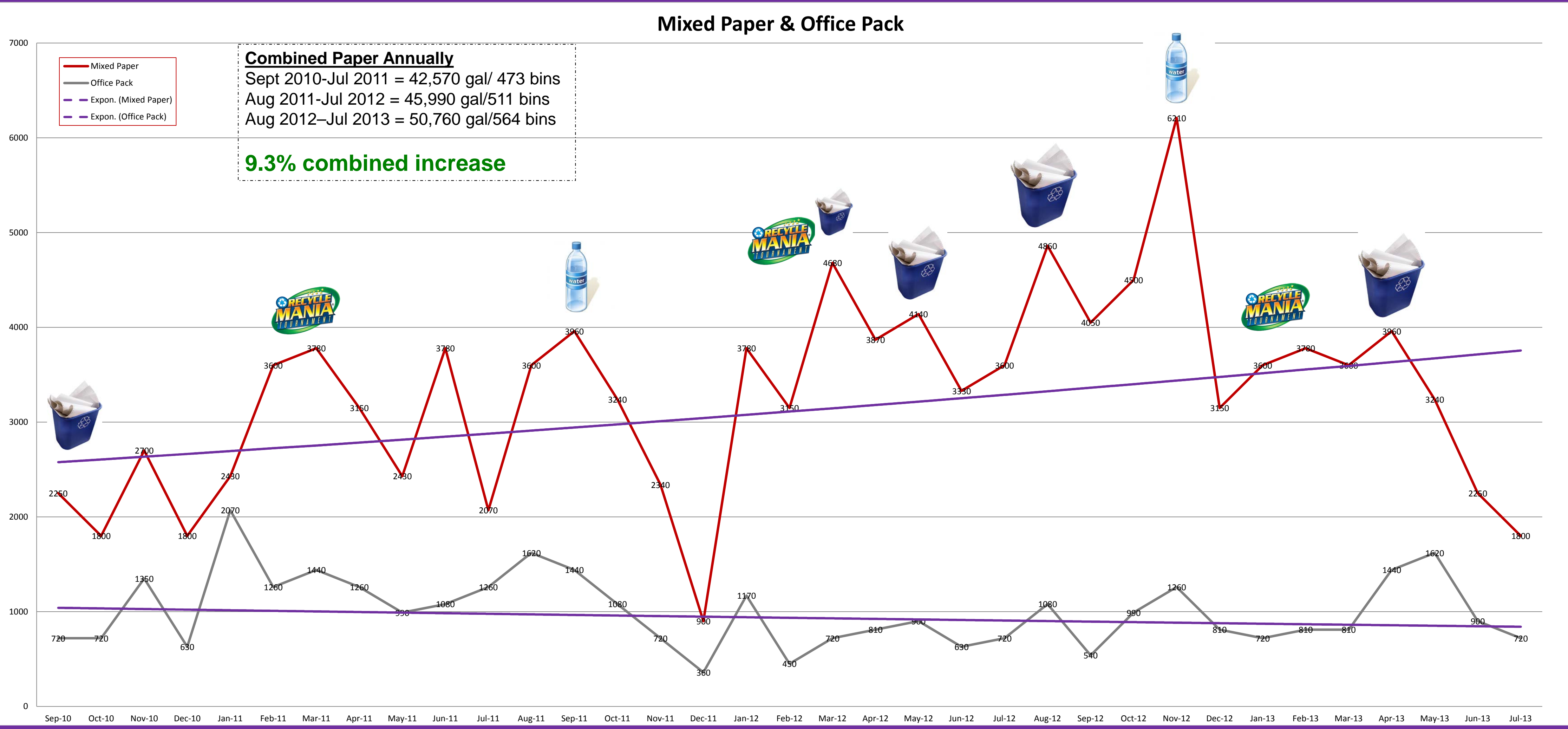
Sept 2010-Jul 2011 = 2,850 gal/57 bags
Aug 2011-Jul 2012 = 5,400 gal/108 bags
Aug 2012-Jul 2013 = 10,050 gal/201 bags

223.35% increase
From end of year 1 to end of year 3

Plastics #1 and #2 Annually

Sept 2010-Jul 2011 = 9,200 gal/184 bags
Aug 2011-Jul 2012 = 12,750 gal/255 bags
Aug 2012-Jul 2013 = 22,300 gal/446 bags

122.3% increase
From end of year 1 to end of year 3



Mixed Paper

Sept 2010-Jul 2011 = 29,790 gal/ 331bins
Aug 2011-Jul 2012 = 36,990 gal/411 bins
Aug 2012-Jul 2013 = 40,140 gal/446 bins

23.53% increase
From end of year 1 to end of year 3

Office Pack

Sept 2010-Jul 2011 = 12,780 gal/ 142 bins
Aug 2011-Jul 2012 = 9,000 gal/ 100 bins
Aug 2012-Jul 2013 = 10,620 gal/118 bins

-23.86% decrease
From end of year 1 to end of year 3

Centralized waste and recycling centers make it easy for both staff and students, while encouraging everyone to throw away less and recycle more. The library continues to recycle, re-purpose, and re-use items such as furniture, office supplies, Styrofoam, packing materials, and telephone books.

Image of recycling quad, Mom's Café.



Background

In September 2010 following the expansion of its recycling program with the implementation of centralized waste stations, the J. Willard Marriott Library began tracking the quantity of paper, aluminum, and plastics #1 and #2 being collected. In addition to making it convenient to recycle, the library explored the use of reminders, visual cues, and educational exhibits to increase recycling. The charts show materials collected from September 2010 through August 2013 and markers correspond with a timeline of activities.

Objective

Observe the recycling stream at the Marriott Library noting changes and/or spikes in materials collected during months that included education campaigns. Education and awareness was generated using exhibits, posters, and email focusing on behavior change. Behaviors included reducing paper usage, engaging in printing alternatives, introduction of pressboard into mixed paper stream, use of refillable bottles, recycling single use plastics, increasing student involvement and engaging staff in recycling activities through centralized waste collection.

Method

Custodial staff tracked the number of 60 gallon bags of aluminum cans and plastic s collected weekly, in addition to the number of 90 gallon containers being filled with office pack and mixed paper. All tracking was done in an Excel spreadsheet maintained by the custodial supervisor and library sustainability coordinator. All measurements on charts are reflected in gallons. Numbers were averaged to number of full containers. Sixty gallon bags were estimated to hold fifty gallons of material per bag after being tied shut.

Observation

Spikes in recycling materials collected were observed during times that behavior change campaigns occurred in the library. Gradual declines were noted when campaigns ended, although a general improvement over the period measured is noted. With the exception of Office Pack, which showed a decrease by 23.86% in materials collected from end of year one to end of year three. Mixed paper collection increased 23.53%, aluminum cans increased 223.35%, and plastics increased 122.3%.

Recommendation

Performing a full waste audit to identify other areas of improvement and additional data, continue to provide visual reminders to all visitors of the Library how to recycle and reduce use of resources through exhibits and visual cues. Coordinate with custodial to determine how to increase the amount of Office Pack collected and divert any that may be making its way into the Mixed Paper stream.

The Paper Project

The Paper Project includes the run of two (2) exhibits intended to educate and create awareness about paper consumption, the choices individuals have, and environmental impacts. This was a collaborative project between the Marriott Library Green Committee and the U of U EnviroClub, funded by the Sustainable Campus Initiative Fund (SCIF).

-The Life Cycle of Paper

-Print Alternatives & Smart Printing



Presenter
Karren Nichols, Senior
Sociology and Consumer and Community Studies

Recent publication: "Academic libraries as sustainability leaders." *Focus on Educating for Sustainability: Toolkit for Academic Libraries*. Maria A. Jankowska. Library Juice Press, book chapter. February 2014.

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